

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method of inhibiting formation of an atherosclerotic lesion comprising administering to
2 a mammal a compound that reduces expression of AFABP.
- 1 2. A method of inhibiting formation of an atherosclerotic lesion in a mammal, comprising
2 identifying a mammal in need of said inhibition, and introducing to said mammal a
3 compound that reduces expression of AFABP.
- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein said compound inhibits transcription of said AFABP.
- 1 4. The method of claim 1 wherein said compound binds to a cis-acting regulatory sequence
2 of said AFABP.
- 1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein said compound inhibits expression of said AFABP in
2 macrophages but not in adipocytes.
- 1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein said compound inhibits expression of said AFABP in
2 adipocytes but not in macrophages.
- 1 7. The method of claim 3, wherein said inhibitor is an antisense nucleic acid.
- 1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein said antisense nucleic acid molecule comprises at least
2 10 nucleotides the sequence of which is complementary to an mRNA encoding an
3 AFABP polypeptide.
- 1 9. The method of claim 7, wherein said antisense nucleic acid is a DNA operatively linked
2 to a macrophage-specific promoter, wherein transcription of said DNA yields nucleic
3 acid product which is complementary to an mRNA encoding an AFABP polypeptide.
- 1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein said compound is introduced into an artery of said
2 mammal.
- 1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein said compound is locally administered to a site of an
2 atherosclerotic lesion in said mammal.
- 1 12. A method of inhibiting differentiation of a macrophage into a foam cell, comprising
2 contacting said macrophage with an inhibitor of AFABP expression.
- 1 13. A method of inhibiting formation of an atherosclerotic lesion comprising administering
2 to a mammal a compound that reduces activity of AFABP.
- 1 14. The method of claim 13, wherein said compound is an AFABP-specific intrabody.
- 1 15. The method of claim 13, wherein said compound is introduced into an artery of said
2 mammal.

1 16. The method of claim 13, wherein said compound is locally administered to a site of an
2 atherosclerotic lesion in said mammal.

1 ~~17.~~ A method for identifying a compound which inhibits development of an atherosclerotic
2 lesion, comprising the steps of:

- 3 (a) contacting AFABP with a fatty acid in the presence of a candidate compound; and
4 (b) determining the level of AFABP binding to said fatty acid, wherein a decrease in
5 said level of binding in the presence of said candidate compound, compared to the level of
6 binding in the absence of said candidate compound indicates that said compound inhibits
7 development of an atherosclerotic lesion.

1 ~~18.~~ A method for identifying a compound which inhibits development of an
2 atherosclerotic lesion, comprising:

- 3 (a) providing AFABP with a fatty acid bound thereto to form a complex;
4 (b) contacting said complex with a candidate compound; and
5 (c) determining whether said candidate compound decreases the binding of AFABP to
6 a fatty acid in said complex as an indication of the ability of said candidate compound to
7 inhibit AFABP binding, wherein a decrease in said level of binding in the presence of said
8 candidate compound, compared to the level of binding in the absence of said candidate
9 compound indicates that said compound inhibits development of an atherosclerotic lesion.

1 ~~19.~~ A method for identifying a compound which inhibits AFABP expression in a cell,
2 said method comprising the steps of:

- 3 (a) providing a cell that expresses AFABP;
4 (b) culturing said cell in the presence of a candidate compound; and
5 (c) determining the level of expression of a AFABP in said cell, wherein an increase
6 in said level of expression in the presence of said candidate compound compared to the level
7 of expression in the absence of said candidate compound indicates that said candidate
8 compound inhibits AFABP expression in said cell.

1 20. The method of claim 20, wherein said cell is a macrophage.

1 21. The method of claim 20, wherein said cell is an adipocyte.

1 ~~22.~~ A method for determining the ability of a candidate compound to inhibit binding of
2 AFABP to an intracellular ligand in a macrophage, said method comprising the steps of:

- 3 (a) providing a macrophage that expresses AFABP;

- 4 (b) culturing said macrophage in the presence of said candidate compound; and
5 (c) determining the level of fatty acid binding in said macrophage, wherein an
6 decrease in said level of binding in the presence of said compound, compared to the level of
7 binding in the absence of said compound, is an indication of the ability of said candidate
8 compound to inhibit AFABP/fatty acid binding in a macrophage.

1 ~~23.~~ A method for determining the ability of a candidate compound to inhibit binding of
2 AFABP to an intracellular ligand in an adipocyte, said method comprising the steps of:

- 3 (a) providing an adipocyte that expresses AFABP;
4 (b) culturing said adipocyte in the presence of said candidate compound; and
5 (c) determining the level of fatty acid binding in said macrophage, wherein an
6 decrease in said level of binding in the presence of said compound, compared to the level of
7 binding in the absence of said compound, is an indication of the ability of said candidate
8 compound to inhibit AFABP/fatty acid binding in an adipocyte.

add A'
add C⁴

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